

THE

(4.)

Poor Mechanick's Plea,

AGAINST THE

RICH CLERGY'S

OPPRESSION:

SHEWING

Tithes are no Gospel-Minister's Maintenance.

IN

A Brief and plain Method, how that TITHES, (as now paid) are both inconsistent with the Dispensation of the Law, and the Dispensation of the GOSPEL.

Also, how they were brought into the Church many Hundred Years after Christ, and Testified against by several Ancient Christians and Martyrs.

With several Sober Reasons against the Payment of them.

By J. BOCKETT.

By reason of the Multitude of Oppressions, they make the Oppressed to cry: They cry out by reason of the Arm of the Mighty.

JOB, xxxv. 9.

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THE
P R E F A C E

TO THE
R E A D E R ;

OR, THE
AUTHOR'S APOLOGY for this Book.

ALTHOUGH several books have been published heretofore, treating on the same subject as this small Treatise doth, but far exceeding the limits thereof, yet I am not without hope, but this also may prove a means or help for the satisfaction of some, that may probably be in doubt, whether TITHES, as now paid, are warrantable by Scripture, for the maintaining of a Gospel-Ministry : which doubt (I think) the impartial will find removed, or answered, as they seriously peruse the same ; although the stile therein may seem to some to be in a mean and plain manner. But let such know, I am no learned Academic, but a poor Mechanick, and have endeavoured to be intelligible unto all. And if it be liable to the censure of some of those that may think themselves immediately concerned, when they see their Craft to be in danger, let such make it appear, that it is contrary to the naked truth, and far be it from me to justify or maintain the same : but if it appears to be the truth (as I hope nothing will be found to the contrary) then I desire it may prevail and prosper over all falshood and error.

Yet I would have none think, that I do believe the whole body of the Clergy of England to be equally guilty of oppression, &c. I say, Nay ; but that there are several sober and moderate men among them, considering their station ; which I desire that the Lord, in his due time, may make able Ministers indeed, not of the letter, but of the spirit ; and then they will follow the examples of the Apostles, and minister freely.

J. BOCKETT

THE POOR MECHANICK'S PLEA, &c.

THE consideration of the great oppression and heavy burden of TITHES, that is imposed upon the inhabitants of this land, and lieth weightily upon the laborious husbandmen and farmers, that bestow great labour and pains, and also are at great charges, in manuring and ordering their land, sowing of their seed, maintaing of servants, keeping of cattle, great rents, and taxes, &c. and many casualties and hazards they are liable unto; then patiently waiting the appointed season, and expecting (through the Lord's blessing) to reap the fruit of their labours; but perhaps a quarter (if not more) of their profit is raked away by the Tithe-monger's servants: But chiefly this unreasonable payment of Tithes is most heavy and burdensome upon those that for conscience sake cannot uphold or maintain that ministry which takes them, which they believe is not of God. And this is one of the most principal pillars, by which the National Ministry is upheld, to wit, TITHES.

Therefore, considering this, it is in my mind to write concerning the same, under these three heads or chapters.

First, Of the Manner and Nature thereof, and end for which they were given under the Law, and their Abolishment.

Secondly, Of the Maintenance of Christ's Ministers under the Gospel Dispensation in the Primitive Times.

And Thirdly, Of the establishment of Tithes, after the Apostacy entered, contrary both to Law and Gospel; with the testimony of Ancient Christians against the same.

CHAP. I.

Of the Manner of TITHES, and the End for which they were given under the Law, and their Abolishment.

TITHES were commanded by the Lord, under the Law, or First Covenant, to be paid by Israel in the land of Canaan unto the tribe of Levi; and that any other people or nation had the like command to pay them, is not so much as mentioned in Scripture; and this only was in and under the First Covenant: For this tribe the Lord chose, and set apart for his work and service of the Tabernacle, and office of the Priesthood; for the Lord said, "I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel, for an inheritance for their service which they

"serve, even the service of the Tabernacle of the Congregation," Numb. xviii. 21. And they had no other inheritance among their brethren, for the Lord was their inheritance, Deut. x. 9. "And of the Tithe of the land, whether the seed of the land, or fruit of the tree, it was holy unto the Lord," Levit. xxvii. 30. And when they had received of their brethren, the children of Israel, as from the Lord, "their Tithe or Tenth," they were commanded to offer an heave-offering of it to the Lord also, even a tenth part of the Tithe, "Numb. xviii. 26. And this was the portion of Aaron the Priest, for himself, and his sons, even the tenth of the tenth, or an hundredth part, Numb. xviii. 19.

So by this it is evident, that the cause or reason, why the tribe of Levi received Tithes, was, 1st, Because they had no part, portion, or lot in the land, as the other tribes had. 2dly, Because it was their daily work to serve at the Tabernacle, and to be assistant to the priests, in killing and offering beasts, &c. for sacrifice; with many other things, too numerous to be here inserted, but may partly be seen in Numbers, third, fourth, and eighth chapters.

Moreover, This one tribe may be thought to be (if not a full tenth, yet) near a tenth part of the people; but they were not to enjoy or possess the full tithe or tenth themselves; for the widow, and the fatherless, and the stranger that were within their gates, were to come and eat and be satisfied, Deut. xiv. 29. For there was not to be a beggar in Israel; yet the poor were not to cease out of the land, Deut. xv. 11.

Now to compare the manner and practice of the National Ministers, or Tithe-Mongers of these days, with the manner and practice of the Levites and Priests under the first covenant, as established by the Lord; I think there are but few so blind, but they may see a great difference and contrariety.

For observe, 1. Here was one whole tribe that took Tithe, as the Lord commanded; which may be, as I said, near a tenth part of the people in the land. But, I believe, the National Priests are not the hundredth part of the people in England, including their wives and children. Then note, How unreasonable it is in them, that call themselves Gospel Ministers, to exact and take ten times as much by the law of man (considering their number proportionably) as the Levites had given them by the law of God, and yet perform not that service for which they were given.

2. There was no other tribe to receive Tithes, but only the tribe of Levi: But if these Priests were put to prove themselves of the lineage of Levi, and of Aaron's stock, it would puzzle the

strongest brains amongst them, and be a harder thing for them to do, than by all their wisdom and perusal of ancient authors they could perform. So then, seeing they cannot prove themselves of that race or tribe, let them shew a command, if they can, that any other tribe had to take Tithe, throughout the whole Bible.

3. The Levites had no inheritance among their brethren in the land of Canaan. But many of the national priests have besides their Tithes, glebe-lands, and some considerable estates in land, and other ways of gain and profit, sufficient for a competent livelihood.

4. The Levites or priests were to offer sacrifice for themselves, and the sins of their brethren almost continually. But the priests of England for their Tithes, perhaps may study a few hours in a week to make up a matter of their own brain, and not from the Lord, and deliver it unto the people for a divine matter. For it would not agree with the manner of their education, personally to take upon them, the occupation of a butcher, to kill bullocks, rams, lambs, &c. for sacrifice, neither to be so laborious, as the Levites and priests were under the law. So then they come short of the priests due, which was the shoulder, the two cheeks, and the maw, Deut. xviii. 3. But their stomachs are used to more dainty fare, for the most part.

5. The Tithes in the first covenant did relieve the widows, the fatherless, and the stranger, that there was no beggar to be in Israel; but these national Tithe-mongers claim all for themselves; so greedy they are of gain, that some of them attain to such a degree of height, that they have several hundred pounds per annum; yea, some several thousands, so desirous are they to enlarge and augment their benefices; and if such out of their large revenues do voluntarily contribute to the relief of the poor, then, perhaps, he is called a good charitable man, although the poor have as much right to Tithes as himself, according to the law of God, *aforsaid*, Deut. xiv. 29. And if those Tithes were now so divided, that the poor of the nation might have their part to relieve their necessities, there would not be that multitude of poor distressed miserable people about the nation as there are; neither need laborious tradesmen, and mean housekeepers, be burdened with such large parish rates and assessments, towards their relief, as is very evident they are in several places.

Now if it were possible (as it is not) that the national ministers could make full proof that all things relating to the first covenant they did precisely practise and observe, yet it would not avail them, or vindicate such a practice under the second covenant, or gospel dispensation; for the Lord said by the mouth of Jeremy, "That the day is come that I will make a new covenant with the house

" of Israel, and with the house of Judah : not according to the
 " covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took
 " them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. "
 Jer. xxxi. 31, 32.

Now this new covenant, I believe there are none, or but few, but that do own it to be the gospel dispensation, which was fulfilled when Christ came and suffered ; for the author to the Hebrews alludes to the same place of scripture, Heb. viii. 8, 9. and also speaks, that if the first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been found for the second, for that could not make him that did the service perfect, as appertaining to the conscience, Heb. ix. 9, 10. which stood only in outward and carnal things ; therefore the Lord said, I will make a new one : and Christ the everlasting High-priest, Heb. vii. 27, 28. came to do his Father's will, and offered himself up once for all ; so he taketh away the first, that he may establish the second, Heb. x. 9. and changed the Levitical priesthood and the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law that was outward, Heb. vii. 12. for Christ was the end thereof, Rom. x. 4. in which Tithes were included, being a Jewish rite, belonging to that priesthood.

Now I cannot perceive that any can reasonably suppose, that the Tithes (or wages as I may say) being Jewish, that was due to the Levites for the work and service of the law, or first covenant, should remain in force as due to those that never were employed in that service, and also not of Israel's stock, especially when all that was abolished for which they were given.

But the second covenant, which was not according to the first, (viz.) outward, was, that the Lord would put his law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and there should be a more universal knowledge of the Lord, Heb. viii. 10, 11. for his spirit in this gospel dispensation of the new covenant, is poured forth upon sons and daughters, Acts. ii. 17. as was prophesied by Joel, chap. ii. 28. so that the Christians can say, (as they witness the fulfilling of this promise) that which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God hath shewed it unto them, Rom. i. 19. " For they being delivered from the law, (that being dead in
 " which they were held) that they should serve the Lord in new-
 " nesses of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter," Rom. viii. 6.

So it plainly appears, that the first covenant, or dispensation of the law that was outward, and chiefly relating to the Jews, was abolished by Christ ; and the second covenant, or gospel dispensation, came to take place ; which is inward and universal to as many as believe, both Jews and Gentiles, Rom. x. 12.

CHAP. II.

Of the Establishment, and Maintenance of Christ's Ministers, under the Second Covenant, or Gospel Dispensation.

WHEN Christ sent forth his disciples to preach unto the people, he said, "*The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he (mark, it is God's work) would send forth labourers into the harvest. Go your ways (said he) behold I send you forth as lambs among wolves,* Luke, x. 2, 3. but then their commission was only to the *Jews*, and into such cities as he himself should come; for he said, "*Go not into the way of the Gentiles, but rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; freely ye have received, freely give,* Mat. x. 5, 6, 8. by which we may observe, although the *Jews* at that time did pay *Tithes*, and it was lawful for them so to do, Luke. xi. 42. for Christ had not yet suffered, yet his ministers had no such command from him to receive them; but his command was, that they should eat and drink such things as were set before them, by those that received them and their doctrine only, for the *labourer* is worthy of his *meat*, or *hire*, Luke. x. 7, 8. So his followers then (as well as now) were contented with his allowance, for they returned rejoicing, and could say, they lacked nothing; for without doubt, such whose hearts as were open to receive them and their doctrine, were also open to communicate to their necessities.

But when Christ had suffered and rose again, *finishing what he came to do*, John. xix. 30. then he bid his ministers *go and teach all nations* (now, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*) what to do? to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, (said he) and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world, Matth. xxviii. 19, 20. Now if all things that Christ commanded were to be taught to all nations to observe, how can any suppose this one particular thing concerning his ministers maintenance should be excluded from the rest of things commanded by him. But now I will shew how far his ministers taught and observed his command in this one point.

Paul, that eminent minister and apostle, writing to the church at *Corinth*, in his first epistle, chap. ix. saith, *The seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord*, verse 2. shewing that he had begotten them into a lively faith in Christ, therefore speaks as unto his children, 2 Cor. xii. 14. and queries with them, saying, "*Have we (meaning his fellow-labourers) not power to eat and to drink?*" verse 4.

Have we not power to forbear working? verse 6. and Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? Or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? verse 7. Then speaking concerning the law, saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn, verse 9. being written for our sakes, saith he, for the labourer is worthy of his reward, 1 Tim. v. 18. And if we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? 1 Cor. ix. 11. And they which wait at the altar, are partakers with the altar; even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the gospel, should live of the gospel, ver. 13, 14. also, Let him that is taught in the word, communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things, Gal. vi. 6.

Now these are some of the chiefest places in scripture, that shew how far the gospel ministers have power to partake or receive carnal things of those that they imparted spiritual things unto, and none other; wherein is not so much as a word of *Tithes* or *Tenths* named, nor yet any particular allowance. And having food and raiment (saith he) let us be therewith content, 1 Tim. vi. 8. So by these testimonies, it doth appear plainly, that there is an agreement and concurrence between Christ and his ministers concerning this thing.

Now how the national priests can plead for *Tithes* or *Tenths*, as due to gospel ministers, from scripture, for my part, I cannot understand; for there is not any command, or any example therein to be found, as I can perceive; and when some have been put to prove it by scripture, it hath been too hard a task for them: but to claim it as their right, they presently flee to the law of the nation; and say, that will give it them.

But now I will also shew how the gospel ministers observed what they taught: Paul, as before, shews how far their power extended: But, (saith he) nevertheless, we have not used that power, nor none of these things, but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ, 1 Cor. ix. 12. Neither have I written these things, that it should be so done unto me; for though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of, for necessity is laid upon me; yea, Wo is unto me if I preach not the gospel, ver. 15, 16. For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me: What is my reward then? Verily, that when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel, ver. 17, 18. So here is a good example for a gospel minister, although he had power to partake of their carnal things, being the fruit of his ministry, yet he rather chose to work with his hands, to help to

supply his necessities, than make use of his power to them and some others, *Act. xviii. 3. and xx. 34. 1 Cor. iv. 12. 1 Thess. ii. 9. 2 Thess. iii. 8.* lest he should be chargeable or burdensome, so as to abuse his power; "for (saith he) *I will not be burdensome to you, for I seek not yours, but you; and I will very gladly spend and be spent for you,*" *2 Cor. xii. 15.* But sometimes he did make use of his power of receiving carnal things in some other churches to supply his necessities; as appears in *2 Cor. xi. 7, 8, 9. and Phil. iv. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18.* also he left a charge to those that were rich in this world, to be rich also in good works, ready to distribute to the saints necessities, *Rom. xii. 13. and willing to communicate, 1 Tim. vi. 18. For with such sacrifice God is well pleased, Heb. xiii. 16.* So by what has been already said, it is evident that Christ's ministers, may lawfully work or labour with their hands; and also have power to forbear working, when they see it convenient; also, that they have power to receive temporals (if they lack) of those only that receive their ministry; and farther, they freely gave as they had freely received; for a necessity was laid upon them to preach the gospel, whether they partook of carnal things or not.

But now if it were possible that the national ministers could prove *Tribes* due by scripture, unto true pastors, teachers, or ministers, it would little avail them except they could prove themselves such, by comparing their lives and practices with those that were truly so indeed, according to scripture testimony, which I believe they cannot do, but rather will be found by this way of trial by scripture (and I hope they will grant it is equal) to be in the steps of the false prophets, ministers, &c.

And to make this appear more plain, I will here collect some testimonies concerning each of them apart out of scripture.

I. Of True Prophets, Pastors, Ministers, Teachers, &c. Their Marks.

SAMUEL called all Israel to witness, and said, *Whose ox have I taken? Or whose ass have I taken? Or whom have I defrauded? Whom have I oppressed? Or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith? And I will restore it you. And they said, Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken ought of any man's hand: and the Lord was witness unto the truth thereof, 1 Sam. xii. 3, 4, 5.* And David, a king and prophet, said, *He was upright before the Lord, and had kept himself from his iniquity, and the Lord recompensed him according to the cleanness of his hands, Psal. xviii. 23, 24.* And further said, *Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee: for it is as a lamp unto my*

feet, and a light unto my path. For he had done the commandments of the Lord, and loved and kept his testimonies. Psal. cxix. 11, 105, 166, 167. And the Lord said unto Jeremiah, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth, Jer. i. 9. And when he saw the word of the Lord became a reproach, he thought to speak no more in his name, but his word was in mine heart (saith he) as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and could not stay, Jer. xx. 9. And these prophets of the Lord, spake by his spirit in them, Nehem. ix. 30. by which he revealed his secrets unto them, Amos. iii. 7. 1 Cor. ii. 10. And such declared his word faithfully, what the Lord put in their mouths, 1 Kings. xxii. 14. And Micah said, Truly I am full of power by the spirit of the Lord, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and unto Israel his sin, Mic. iii. 8.

Christ commanded his disciples to teach the nations to observe his commands (as aforesaid;) but first they were to tarry until they were endued with power from on high, Luke xxiv. 49. which after they had received, Acts. i. 8. and ii. 4. they went forth to preach freely, and it was their care to make the gospel free, and without charge, as Paul said, I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel, but his hands ministered to his necessities, Acts xx. 33, 34. And it was also the practice of others, as appears, 1 Cor. iv. 12. 1 Thess. ii. 9. and 2 Thess. iii. 8. And their gifts were spiritual, whether prophecy, ministry, teaching, or exhortation, 1 Cor. xiv. 1. Rom. xii. 6, 7, 8. For as every one had received the gift, so they were to minister, as good stewards, 1 Pet. iv. 10. And Paul was made a minister, not of man, nor by man, Gal. i. 1. but according to the gift of the grace of God, Ephes. iii. 7. And their work was to turn people from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto the power of God, Acts 26. 18. Not that they were sufficient of themselves to do any thing, but their sufficiency was of God, who made them able ministers of the new testament, not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life, 2 Cor. iii. 5, 6. Now they received the spirit of God, by which they knew the things of God, which things they spake, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but what the Holy Ghost teacheth, 1 Cor. ii. 12, 31. And then they could say to those that believed, Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblameably, we behaved ourselves among you, 1 Thess. ii. 10.

II. Of False Prophets, Pastors, Ministers, Teachers, &c. Their Marks.

BALAAM was a prophet, but his way was perverse before the Lord, Numb. xxii. 33. And Peter speaks of some that followed this Balaam, who loved the wages of unrighteousness, but

supply his necessities, than make use of his power to them and some others, *Acts* xviii. 3. and xx. 34. *1 Cor.* iv. 12, *1 Thess.* ii. 9. *2 Thess.* iii. 8. lest he should be chargeable or burdensome, so as to abuse his power; "for (saith he) *I will not be burdensome to you, for I seek not yours, but you; and I will very gladly spend and be spent for you,*" *2 Cor.* xii. 15. But sometimes he did make use of his power of receiving carnal things in some other churches to supply his necessities; as appears in *2 Cor.* xi. 7, 8, 9. and *Phil.* iv. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. also he left a charge to those that were rich in this world, to be rich also in good works, ready to distribute to the saints necessities, *Rom.* xii. 13. and willing to communicate, *1 Tim.* vi. 18. For with such sacrifice God is well pleased, *Heb.* xiii. 16. So by what has been already said, it is evident that *Christ's ministers*, may lawfully work or labour with their hands; and also have power to forbear working, when they see it convenient; also, that they have power to receive temporals (if they lack) of those only that receive their ministry; and farther, they freely gave as they had freely received; for a necessity was laid upon them to preach the gospel, whether they partook of carnal things or not.

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BALAM was a prophet, but his way was perverse before the Lord, Numb. xxii. 33. And Peter speaks of some that followed this Balaam, who loved the wages of unrighteousness, but

chiefly them which walk after the flesh, and count it pleasure to riot in the day time, having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin, (mark) beguiling unstable souls; an heart they have exercised with covetous practices, 2 Pet. ii. 10, 13, 14, 15. which is abhorred by the Lord, Psalm. x. 3. it being idolatry, Col. iii. 5. And the covetous idolaters, Eph. v. 5. They are those that the Prophet Isaiah compares to greedy dogs, that can never have enough; looking every one for his gain from his quarter, Isa. lvi. 11. And such that teach for hire, and divine for money; and he that putteth not into their mouths, they even prepare war against him, Mic. iii. 5, 11. And they covet fields (or the fruits thereof) and take them by violence, having the power (or law) in their hand, like old Eli's sons, that took mens goods by force. So they oppress a man and his house, or heritage, Mic. ii. 1, 2. 1 Sam. ii. 16. And by their means they bear rule; which is a horrible thing committed in the land, but a people loved to have it so, Jer. v. 30, 31. And say, Speak unto us smooth things, Isa. xxx. 10. So these prophets say, Peace, peace, and there was no peace, Jer. vi. 14. And say, The Lord hath said, when he never spake by them, nor sent them; yet they run, and prophesy lies in his name, of the deceit of their own heart, Jer. xiv. 14. and xxiii. 21, 25, 26, 30, 31. Which is likened to daubing with untempered mortar, or sewing pillows under people's arm-holes, Ezek. xiii. 7, 10, 11. These prophets conspire together, like a roaring lion, ravening the prey; they have devoured souls, they have taken the treasure and precious things, they have made many widows, Ezek. xxii. 25. They scatter the sheep, and feed themselves with the fat, and clothe themselves with the wool; but feed not the flock, nor seek that which was lost or driven away, but with force and cruelty have ruled. The true prophets cried *Wo* against such, Jer. xxxiii. 1, 2. Ezek. xxxiv. 2, 3, 4.

And Christ compared such to ravening wolves in sheeps cloathing, and bids us beware of them, for by their fruits (saith he) ye shall know them, Mat. vii. 15, 16. For they love to go in long cloathing, and love salutations in the market-places, and chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts, and to be called of men Rabbi, or master, Mat. xxiii. 6, 7. Mark xii. 38, 39. Luke-xx. 46. These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts, and their mouth speaking great swelling words; having men's persons in admiration, because of advantage, Jude 16. who by their natural knowledge are become brutish, Jer. li. 17. Jude x. for it puffeth up, 1 Cor. viii. 1. and the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned, 1 Cor. ii. 14. They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth

them, 1 John iv. 5. *And the traditions and commandments of men they teach for doctrine, and seem to draw near God with their mouths, and honour him with their lips, but their hearts are far away, Mat. xv. 8, 9. Teaching things which they ought not for filthy lucre sake, Tit. i. 11. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words, make merchandize of some; promising them liberty, while they themselves are the servants of corruption, 2 Pet. ii. 3, 19. Such consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, but doting about questions, and strifes of words, whereof comes envy, strife, railings, &c. 1 Tim. vi. 3, 4, 5. From such withdraw thyself.*

Now I have briefly inserted some of the general marks mentioned in Holy Scripture, describing both the true and false prophets, ministers, &c. and in the last description it doth seem to appear, that the *physiognomy* of the national ministers is most discerned, and therefore have we just cause to believe they are no true gospel ministers.

But if any should suppose that this way of a general proof or trial is insufficient to render them no gospel ministers, I shall also insert a few particulars, wherein they, and the true ministers of Christ, are opposite, in call, life, and practice.

First, Christ sends forth, and gives commission to his ministers; and they approved themselves as his ministers, in much patience, in affliction, in necessity, in distress, &c. 2 Cor. vi. 4.

But these national ministers are sent forth by man, and their commission they receive from man, and by man's power they are upheld.

Secondly, Christ's ministers preached not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and power, as they were taught by the Holy Ghost, and as that gave them utterance, 1 Cor. ii. 4, 13. Acts ii. 4. Luke xii. 12. although several were mean mechanicks.

But the national ministers are fitted to their ministry by the wisdom and study of man, being partly educated at Oxford or Cambridge, their learning and study of natural languages, arts, sciences, and philosophy, and old heathen authors, the inventions and traditions of men; who, by their natural industry and parts, attain to their several degrees, until they are thought of ability to set up for themselves.

Thirdly, Christ sent forth his ministers as sheep among wolves, and bid them be as wise as serpents, and as harmless as doves, Mat. x. 16.

But some of the national ministers rather appear to be in the nature of wolves themselves, in sheep's cloathing; for their works have too evidently manifested the same, by making havock and spoil of the goods of their innocent and harmless neighbours, and violently

taking the same from them ; and not only so, but sometimes casting their bodies into prison, and there have caused them to remain until the expiration of their days, because they could not for conscience sake put into the mouths of these that are greedy of *filthy lucre*, or such that seek *their gain from their quarter*.

Fourthly, Christ commands his ministers to go from one place, city, or nation, to another, to instruct or teach the people, and promised to be *always with them to the world's end*.

But the *priests* and *bishops* are limited within their particular *dioceses* and *parishes*, great part of their days ; except sometimes when a *larger benefice* is vacant, then some that have resided in a *smaller benefice* will strive hard to get into it : so when they do remove from one place to another, it is to get more money by the *bargain* ; and unto such calls as these, (*viz. Come up higher*) their ears are very attentive ; but to forsake a large benefice, and voluntarily take a small one, I never yet heard of one that did it.

Fifthly, Christ's ministers *freely received their ministry* from him, and *freely they gave again*.

But this is not the case of the priests in our days ; for they (or their parents) sometimes are at *great charge* and *expence* in fitting them out to their trade or ministry, and maintaining them at the university several years ; so that they cannot truly say, they have *freely* received their ministry, neither do they freely give the same : but the people must *buy* it such as will have it (and such as *will not* are forced to pay) at a dear rate, considering how little it is worth : for from seven years to seventy, they remain confessing themselves to be miserable offenders, and that there is no health in them ; and this is an evident token that the Lord never sent them, because they *turn not the people from their evil ways*, Jer. xxiii. 22.

Sixthly, Christ's ministers were not to be as lords over the heritage of God, nor each other : Christ himself forbid it, and said, *It shall not be so among you*, Mat. xx. 26. 1 Pet. v. 3.

But them of the national ministry exercise lordship over their flocks, and each other ; some being called *Lords Spiritual*, and receive or embrace the title of *Right Reverend Father in God—Lord Bishop of—*. Which is contrary to the ministers of Christ.

If I should recite all particulars that might be mentioned, wherein there is a disagreement or contrariety, between the true ministers of Christ in the primitive times, and the national ministers in our days, it would much enlarge what I intend ; therefore these particulars in this place may suffice to shew the difference between them. So to conclude this part, I shall leave these four things for them to prove by scripture, if they can.

1st. To make proof that they are Christ's ministers, by taking

his ministers for their examples; or comparing their lives and practices with those that were truly so in the primitive times, *Phil. iii. 17. 1 Thess. i. 7. 2 Tim. iv. 5.*

2dly. That his ministers have any power or authority from him to take, where it is not freely given.

3dly. That his ministers may, or did contend, strive for, or compel any to give them of the things of this world, although they did partake of their ministry; for a servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle to all men, *2 Tim. ii. 24.*

4thly, And lastly, that his ministers may or did ever force Tithes or maintenance by law, from any that did not receive them, and their doctrine or ministry.

Now if they can make full proof of these four things by plain scripture, the controversy about Tithes would soon be ended; for I believe there would be an universal consent thereunto: but in the interim I shall turn to my third or last head or chapter.

CHAP. III.

Of the Establishment of Tithes after the Apostacy entered, with the Testimonies of several Ancient Christians against the same. Being chiefly collected out of J. Fox's Acts and Monuments, vol. 1. old impression; a book, which, I suppose, most Protestants have a good esteem of.

First, **I** Do not find that the primitive Christians paid or received Tithes throughout all the ten persecutions, or about three hundred years after Christ; but then the Church was maintained by the free benevolence of the people; as witnesseth Origen, Tertullian and Cyprian; and also for the next three hundred years, when Heathenism bore sway in this nation, which was till about the year 600; about which time Austin the Monk was sent hither by Gregory (called) the Great, over from Rome, assisted with several preachers, to convert the Saxons from paganism to popery; Ethelbert being then king of Kent, who was converted, and afterwards his subjects. This Ethelbert is said to be very bountiful to Austin, and gave him the lordship of his chief city of Canterbury; yet I do not find by history, that he gave him Tithes, or commanded Tithes to be given him.

But about the year of our Lord 786, as it is reported, a council being held in Mercia by two legates, sent from pope Hadrian the first, wherein Tithes were established; so it seems the first law for payment of Tithes came from the Pope, and was agreed and consented unto by Offa, being at that king of Mercia, (which was

then about a seventh part of *England*) who by counsel of his Queen, caused *Ethelbert*, first king of the *East-Angles*, to be slain upon false suspicion; and at length this *Offa*, understanding the innocency of *Ethelbert*, and the heinousness of the fact, gave the tenth part of his goods to *holy-church*, in the remembrance of this *Ethelbert*; and built a *monastery* besides, endowing it with lands and rich revenues, for maintenance of an hundred *Monks*; thinking thereby to expiate or lessen his sins, and merit salvation; so afterwards went to *Rome* for his penance, where he gave the church of *St. Peter* a penny for every house throughout his dominion, *Acts & Mon. vol. 1. p. 117.*

And *Ethelwulf*, son of *Egbert*, liking a monkish life, gave the church the *Tithe* of all his goods and lands, *p. 122.*

And also it is said that *Athelston*, about anno 924, caused his younger brother, *Edwin*, to be set in an old rotten boat, in the broad sea, where he being dismayed with the rage of the wind, cast himself over-board, and was drowned; which done *Athelston* the king, coming to remembrance of himself, was stricken with great repentance, and underwent penance the space of seven years together, and also built two *monasteries*, and decreed that *Tithes* should be paid, hoping thereby to expiate his sins; the form of which decree or law was this:

I Athelston King, charge and command all my officers throughout my whole realm, to give Tithes unto God of my proper goods, as well in living cattle, as in corn and fruits of the ground; and that my Bishops likewise of their proper goods, and mine Aldermen, and my officers and head men, shall do the same; and he wills them to declare it to such as be under their subjection, &c. Act. and Mon. p. 137.

Edgar also, about 959, is said to have continued the payment of *Tithes*, who being a man of a vicious life, displaced married priests, and brought in *Monks* of a single life to possess their places: He was a deflowerer of virgins, and other lascivious acts; he also built and repaired divers *monasteries* and *nunneries*.

Then *Canutus* the first *Danish* king, who being guilty of, or had consented unto, the blood of *Edmund* and *Edward*, sons of *Edmund Ironside*, who were heirs to the crown; for which cause it is said, about 1016, he confirmed *Tithes*, and in great devotion built and endowed the *monastery* of *St. Edmund* (now called *St. Edmund's-Bury*, in *Suffolk*) for the seeming ghost of this *St. Edmund* often affrighted him.

So about this time (which was a time of great darkness and ignorance) several such like examples might be produced, whereby the nation came to swarm with several religious orders (so called) and *monasteries*; *nunneries* and *abbies*, were erected and endowed

with large *revenues* and *Tithes* for their maintenance, that the donors or givers thereof, might have their sins remitted, through the prayers and intercession of such that received them.

Now in this short relation there are three things worth observation, *viz.*

1st, It was near 800 years after Christ, before the first law for payment of *Tithes* seems to be made in *England*.

2^{dly}, *Tithes* were first given to the Church by the pope's authority, and confirmed by *Popish* Kings and Princes, that had been guilty of, or had consented unto, *murder* or *bloodshed*, or some other *heinous offence*, for the most part.

3^{dly}, *Tithes* were not given to Christ's *Ministers* to preach the gospel, but to the *Popish* Clergy, as *Priests*, *Monks*, &c. to maintain them in their *idle superstitious* practices; in saying and singing of *masses*, and praying for the souls of their benefactors, that thereby, (as is said) they might have their sins remitted, and merit salvation.

So it is evident, that this way of *maintenance* of *Ministers* by *Tithes*, arose from the *Pope*, and was imposed by his authority, without any ground for it in the *New Testament*, nor yet practised in the Apostles days, nor those that succeeded them for some hundred years afterwards, until the doctrine and orders of the Apostles were neglected, and *errors*, *heresies*, *idolatrous* and *superstitious practices* came to take place.

But yet for a thousand years after Christ, or more, it is observable, that the poor and needy had a share and part in the *Tithes* that was then given, for their maintenance, which had some resemblance to *Moses's* law; but about this time the *Clergy* began to be so far degenerated from *Primitive Christianity*, that much *pride*, *idleness*, *superstition*, *covetousness*, *schisms*, *luxury*, and other *evils*, were crept into their Church, which might be the cause that several of the hearts of the people were withdrawn from such freedom in administering their *Tithes* to the *Clergy*, but gave more to the *poor*, thinking it better bestowed without doubt; which the *Clergy* presently perceiving, began to make *laws* and *decrees*, to compel the people to pay all to them, that they might fill their own pockets; whereby the poor came to be left destitute, and still are, of that which was at first given as their right.

One of the Synodical injunctions of *Anselmus*, Archbishop of *Canterbury*, 1106, was, *That no Tithe should be given but to the Church*. A. & Mon. p. 176.

And about 1180, a *Council* being held under Pope *Alexander* the Third, observing the *poor* to have much given them, made a *decree* to restrain people's freedom in that case.

And about 1215, at the *Council of Lateran*, under Pope *Innocent the Third*, it was decreed, *That Tithes should be paid to the Parochial Priests.*

And also about 1270, at a *Council at Lyons*, under Pope *Gregory the Tenth*, it was constituted, *That it should not henceforth be lawful for men to give their Tithes as they pleased, as they had done, but pay all to the Mother Church.*

Thus you see how the covetous *Clergy* have, by *Popish Laws*, got all to themselves (and robbed the poor of their right.) Nevertheless, in this time of gross darkness, and midnight of *Popery*, the Lord raised up some to stand as *faithful witnesses* for him, against this *Antichristian Yoke of Tithes*, and forced maintenance, as well as other superstitious things: but for brevity's sake, I shall only mention a few testimonies to this purpose.

Arnulphus, Archbishop of *Lugdun*, who lived in the time of Pope *Honorius the Second*, 1127, to the *Clergy* he said, ' I preach to you the truth, and blame your pride, stoutness, avarice, incontinency, with your unmeasurable greediness of getting and heaping up riches.' With much more that they could not bear; therefore it is said, ' They privily took him, and drowned him,' *Testimony of the true Church of God*, p. 97.

Gulielmus de St. Amore, a chief Ruler of the *University of Paris*, about the year 1260, in his 11th *Sign* of true and false prophets, saith, ' That true Apostles do preach only for God's cause, and for the health of souls, and for no temporal gain, but only to the glory of Christ. False prophets do preach upon some occasion, as either seeking some commodity at the hands of men, or else because of getting goods, honour, and praise among men. Therefore these evil and naughty preachers, which preach for worldly gain or honour, or else for the praise and commendation of men, be no true Apostles, but false prophets.' And in his 18th *Sign*, saith, ' That true Apostles do not desire the riches and goods of them to whom they preach,' (much less of those to whom they preach not) whereby they are discerned from wolves, viz. from false prophets, and brings *Paul's* words, *Acts* 20. *I have desired no man's gold nor silver; but his hands ministered to his necessities:* ' This example of labouring (saith he) is a spectacle for Bishops,' *Acts and Mon.* p. 290.

John Wickliff's 17th article, for which he was censured was, ' That Tenths (or *Tithes*) are pure alms, and that the parishioners, may, for the offence of their curates, detain and keep them back, and bestow them upon others at their own wills and pleasures.' Upon which article is a large disputation, in which is shewed what alms are, (viz.) ' *Alms* is a work whereby any thing is given to the

‘ needy of compassion for God’s sake, &c.’ And also shews, ‘ That *Tithes* were the tributes of poor souls, and that the *Clergy* were not lords thereof, but only *stewards*; and if they abuse the same, they are thieves, robbers, and sacrilegious persons.’ And in the prayer and complaint of the *Plowman*, which is thought to be the said *John Wickliff’s*, it is said, ‘ Bnt Lord, there cometh hired men, and they ne feeden not thy sheep in thy plenteous lesfew, but feeden thy sheep with dreams, and false miracles and tales, but at thy truth they ne come not; for Lord I trow thou sendest them never: Lord, of these hired men, speaketh *Jeremy* the Prophet, and thou sayest that word by him, I ne sent them not, and they run quickly; I ne spake unto them, and they prophceden.’ *John Hufs* maintained *J. Wickliff’s* opinions, and sealed the same with his blood, at *Prague* in *Bohemia*.

William Swinderby, one of his articles was, ‘ That *Tithes* purely be *alms*; and that any person thar doth give his *alms* to any, which in his judgment is not in necessity, doth sin in so giving it.’ And in his *appeal* to the King saith, ‘ Christ’s law bids to minister spiritual things freely to the people; the Pope with his law sells for money, as pardons, orders, blessings, sacraments, prayers, benefices, and *preachings* to the people.’ Anno 1389.]

Walter Brute, which is said to be a man having the mighty operation of God’s spirit in him, his 4th article was, ‘ That no man is bound to give *Tithes* or *Oblations*; and if any man will needs give, he may give his *Tithes* and *Oblations* to whom he will, excluding thereby the Curates.’—In his *vindication*, saith, ‘ It is plain that the *Tithes* were given to the sons of *Levi*, for their serving in the Tabernacle, and in the temple of the Lord, as the first fruits were given to the Priests, and also their sacrifices; and so were the vows of their *Ministry*, as it appears in the book of *Numbers*, chap. xxii. But, for as much as the labour of those sacrifices did cease at the coming (or suffering) of Christ, How should those things be demanded, which were ordained for that labour? and seeing that the first fruits were not demanded of Christians; which first fruits were then rather and sooner demanded than the *Tithes*: why must the *Tithes* be demanded, except it be, therefore peradventure, because that the *Tithes* be more worth in value than the first fruits?’ and farther, ‘ Wherefore seeing that neither Christ, nor any of the Apostles commanded to pay *Tithes*, it is manifest and plain, neither by the law of *Moses*, nor by *Christ’s* law, Christian people are bound to pay *Tithes*; but by the traditions of men they are bound.’ With much more upon this subject.

William Thorpe, in his examination before the Archbishop of *Canterbury*, 1407, saith, ' That the Archbishop charged him with preaching openly and boldly at *Shrewsbury*, that Priests have no title to *Tithes*. ' Part of his answer was, ' That in the old law (which ended not fully till the time that Christ rose up again from death to life) God commanded *Tithes* to be given to the *Levites*, for their great business and daily travel that pertained to their office ; but Priests, because their travel was much more easy and light than was the office of the *Levites*, God ordained that the Priests should take the tenth part of those *Tithes* for their livelihood ; but now (I said) in the new Law, neither Christ nor any of his Apostles took *Tithes* of the people, nor commanded the people to pay *Tithes*, neither to Priests nor to Deacons :—He speaketh, that *Gregory* the Tenth commanded new *Tithes* to be paid unto Priests :—And also Christ taught the people to do alms, that is, works of mercy to poor needy men, (of surplus, that is, superfluous of their temporal goods) which they had more than needs to their necessary livelihood ; and thus, I said, not of *Tithes*, but of pure alms of the people, Christ lived and his Apostles, when they were so busy in preaching the word of God to the people, that they might not travel otherwise to get their livelihood ; but after Christ's ascension, when the Apostles had received the Holy Ghost, they travelled with their hands to get their livelihood, &c. '

The Archbishop said, ' Thinkest thou this wholesome learning to sow openly, or yet privately, among the people ? Certain this doctrine contrarieth plainly the ordinance of holy fathers, which have ordained, granted and licensed Priests to be in divers degrees, and to live by *Tithes* and *Offerings* of the people. '

William Thorpe. ' If priests live virtuously, by the example of Christ and his Apostles, without *Tithes*, &c. the people would give them freely sufficient livelihood. '

A. Clarke said, ' How wilt thou make this good, that the people will give freely to the Priests their livelihood, since that now by law every Priest can scarcely constrain the people to give them their livelihood ? '

William Thorpe. ' Sir, it is now no wonder though the people grudge to give Priests the livelihood they ask ; much people know how that Priests should live, and how that they live contrary to Christ and his Apostles ; the poor needy people are forsaken, and left of the Priests to be sustained of the parishioners, as if the Priests took nothing of the parishioners for to help the people withal ; so the parishioners pay their temporal goods twice, where once might suffice, if Priests were true dispensators, &c. '

Now if these faithful *witnesses* and *martyrs* of Jesus have obtained such a good report for their constancy, as they have amongst *Protestants*, why should not their testimonies be thought worthy to be regarded? for doubtless, in what they have here declared concerning *Tithes*, they had the *Holy Scripture* on their side; and not only so, but the Spirit of the Lord in measure did assist and encourage them, to *declare* and *testify* against those things which at this day are upheld and vindicated, and that by those that seem to have an honourable esteem of these first *reformers*, though in life and practice conform not therewith, but are found in the same steps of those they testified against.

But to this purpose I will further add part of the 15th article of the *Bohemians*, against the *usurping power* of the *Clergy* in their day — (viz.) ‘That they receive *Tithes* of men, and will of right ‘have them, and preach and say, that men are bound to give them *Tithes*; and therein they say falsely, for they cannot prove by the *New Testament* that our Lord Jesus Christ commanded it, nor his disciples warned no man to do so, neither did themselves receive them: but, although in the *Old Testament* it were commanded to give *Tithes*, yet it cannot thereby be proved, that Christian Men are bound thereto; for this precept of the *Old Testament* had an end in the first year of (or after) our Lord Jesus Christ, like as the precept of *Circumcision*. Wherefore, well-beloved, consider and see how your *Bishops* seduce you, and shut your eyes, with things that have no proof: *Christ* saith in the 11th of Luke, Give alms of those things that remain; but he said, not Give the Tenth of the goods which ye possess; but, Give alms, &c.’ Anno 1403.

Now, by some of these foregoing testimonies, it seems, that *Tithes* were at first given also amnog some Christians, upon no other account, or ground, than they did give *alms*; being left to every man’s freedom, which (it is said) was divided by the *Bishop*, part to the *Priest*, and part to the *Poor*; but through custom and usage, and the *Clergy*’s covetousness, they at last became enforceable by their laws and decrees, and to be paid to another use than for which they were at first given; and so have continued until this age, through several changes of Government: for generally these cunning TITHE-MONGERS can set their sail to the wind, let it sit how it will, so that by it they may have their own corn ground, or bring large profit to themselves; for if we look a little back, until the reign of Henry VIII King of England, we shall find a great difference and contention between him and the *Pope*, insomuch that at last he denied the *Pope*’s supremacy and authority; and it was abolished in England by *Parliament*, and an act made, which gave the King all religious houses, with all their lands and goods; and the

Clergy took an oath, that they would renounce the *Pope's* authority, and swore to be true to the *King*, his *heirs* and *successors*; they also acknowledged their holding their *bishoprick* of the *King* only, petitioning him to make *restitution* of the *temporalities* of the said *bishopricks*; so then they acknowledged the *King* to be *supreme head* of the *Church*, as they had done the *Pope* before; so this *King*, with his *Parliament*, made two Acts for the recovery of *Tithes*.

After him reigned his son *Edward* the 6th; in whose reign, *injunctions* were set forth, for the pulling down, and removing of *images* out of their *Churches*; and also the *Book of Common Prayer* was established; and another act made for the payment of* *Pre-dical Tithes*.

After him, his sister *Queen Mary* came to the *Crown*; she put down *Common Prayer*, and set up *Popery* and *Mass* again; and the *Clergy* then swore to be true to their *Holy Mother*, the *Church of Rome*, and their *Holy Father*, the *Pope*; there being about three hundred that suffered death for *religion* in her time; among which number, was of the *Clergy* about twenty-six.

Queen Mary dying, her sister *Elizabeth* came to the *Crown*; she put down *Mass* again, and set up *Common Prayer*; and she was acknowledged to be the *Supreme Head of the Church*; and as many of the *Clergy* as refused to take the oath to her, were turned out of their *benefices*; which was but about one hundred and twenty that refused, in about nine thousand, (being not one in seventy.) So by their conformity, they still retained their *Benefices* and *Tithes*, throughout the reign of *King James* the First, and *Charles* the First, till the year 1644, which was in the time of the *Long Parliament*; and then *Common Prayer* was denied, and voted down, and the *Directory* (so called) for publick worship, was set up, by a *Synod of Priests* then sitting at *Westminster*; the generality of the *Clergy*, rather than lose their *benefices*, did conform with this also; but then they having denied and renounced their *ordination by bishops*, were not such *Ecclesiastical Persons* that by former laws had power to demand *Tithes*: also about this time there were many *petitions* to the *Parliament* against them, and much writing for their *abolishment*; so these *Priests* (being quick-sighted in such matters) presently saw danger, and made their *petitions* to the *Parliament* for them, and prevailed against the many *petitions* that were to the contrary; and then they sued the people called *Quakers* for non-payment in *Oliver's* name, at their *courts*, *assizes*, and *sessions*, putting many in prison till death, and making spoil of their goods.

And when *King Charles* the Second came to the *Crown*, and

* Such things as grow from the ground, as CORN, HAY, &c.

the *Common Prayer Book* was set up again, it is yet well known to many now alive, how that many of these *greedy priests* did embrace it again, for lucre sake, as *divine service*; although before they did reject it as *idolatrous*; and since which time, they have gotten other laws made, to recover the oil that feeds the light of their gospel, (as one of them termed *Tithes**) [which laws have by some of them been executed unto great severity, on many of those that for conscience-sake cannot put into their mouths.]

Thus it may be seen, what a great esteem these men have of their high-applauded *Diana of Tithes*, that generally they have conformed to any power that hath been uppermost, rather than lose their profit and gain gotten by their craft, which is as a principal pillar to support and uphold their Ministry; and the foundation of this pillar seems to stand on a bad ground, not warrantable by scripture, and many thousands are (and have been) borne up by it; and if they perceive it to totter or shake, then, for fear it should fall, speedily they call out for help of those they would seem to be above, which hitherto hath been granted them; but if their help and support should come to be withdrawn, then down it would fall, and without question, many that is borne up by it, would tumble down with it; for their lives and practices have but little influence upon the hearts of the people, by which they should be engaged freely to administer unto them, as Gospel-Ministers.

Now considering what I have here laid down concerning *Tithes*, I shall also annex several Reasons why I am persuaded the people called *Quakers* refuse to pay the same unto the Parish Priests; endeavouring thereby to remove the opinion of some, that say, It is only a pretended scruple of conscience, or nothing of conscience in it.

Reason 1. Because *TITHES*, as they are now paid, appear to be inconsistent with all the examples that can be produced from the Old or New Testament.

Reason 2. Because *TITHES*, as they were paid by the *Jews* unto the *Levites*, were put an end unto by Christ, when he offered up himself an acceptable sacrifice, once for all; thereby abolishing that priesthood, and the rites and ceremonies thereof: and to uphold and maintain the same still, is Jewish, and to deny Christ come in the flesh; therefore of Antichrist, 1 John iv. 3.

Reason 3. Because *TITHES*, since Christ, hath been brought in, and set up in the Church, by the Pope's authority, and commanded to be paid by Popish Kings, Princes, Councils, &c. to uphold and maintain the Clergy, in that which Protestants count superstition.

* In a Paper, entitled "The Dreadful Danger of Sacrilege."

Reason 4. Because to pay TITHES is to undervalue, and do contrary to, or censure, the generation of the Faithful, who have borne testimony against it, and suffered under Popery and Prelacy that upheld it.

Reason 5. Because by paying TITHES, is to uphold and maintain such a Ministry, that (with good reason) we believe is inconsistent with the Ministry of Christ.

Reason 6. Because that in so doing we shall be found hypocrites, in putting our hands to help to uphold that thing, which we believe the Lord hath determined to cast down, and utterly abolish.

Reason 7. Because it is said, ' Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind ; and, Whatsoever is not of faith is sin, ' Rom. xiv. 5, 23. And we are persuaded for the reasons aforesaid, that we ought not to pay TITHES ; and also believe, that the National Ministers have no just right to it ; therefore to us it would be a sin to pay it them.

Reason 8. Because we believe that there is no law that is, or can be made by men, of greater power or authority than the law of God, that is truly written in the heart and conscience, agreeable to the Holy Scriptures ; therefore we say, ' Whether ought we not to obey God rather than men, JUDGE YE ? Acts iv. 18. and v. 29.



FINIS.

